



THE TORRANCE HERALD HOME AND GARDEN

Torrance Youth Makes Jaunt To Washington

Ten-year-old Kenny Williams accompanied his father, Frank Williams, of 3927 Torrance Blvd. on a trucking trip to Washington State during his Easter vacation. Highlight of the trip was the crossing of the Columbia River on a ferry, the drifting sands of Nevada and the spectacle of seeing lots of deer en route. The youngster is a student at Beryl Jefferson School in North Redondo.

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GARDENER'S CHECKLIST

- Plants make ideal Easter gifts: Camellias, Rhododendrons, Roses and Azaleas are most appropriate.
- Prepare your soil well before planting, spading deeply.
- It is no longer necessary to make gardening a drudgery by working with heavy, sticky soils. A soil conditioner is available which will make a difficult soil workable. Your nurseryman will be happy to advise you.
- Sandy soils are improved with the addition of humus materials such as peat moss and manures.
- All plants will respond well to fertilizer applications made at this time.

Gardenia Adds Exotic Note To Garden Setting

There is an air of tropical isles and luxuriant jungles about the gardenia. Its heady fragrance and waxy white blossoms add an exotic note and yet seem right at home in the climate of California gardens. An evergreen plant, the gardenia grows in two species. The jasminoides is by far the most widely planted and in this group are the Mystery, Veitch and Radicans varieties. The Mystery and Veitch are the most common selection for California gardens, and they are used in florist shops too. The Radicans is a dwarf form from six to eight inches high, contrasting with the usual six foot growth of the Mystery and Veitch. Gardenia thunbergia is the second species of this plant. It is a more open, taller growing plant with pointed long leaves and large white flowers measuring three inches across. Thunbergia is not as hardy as the Mystery but is more tolerant of various soils and needs less heat.

Prefers Tropical Climate
In general the Gardenia grows well in areas with hot days and warm nights. It requires a well-drained area and an acid soil. Feed an acid-type commercial fertilizer each month from March to September. Some time after first planting, apply cottonseed meal, or bone meal if the soil fertility seems depleted. Before the flowering season a light mulch of well-rotted cow manure may be applied in October and November. Watering should be done carefully during hot, dry weather; by sprinkling around the plant during very dry weather, it assures you will help maintain high humidity and lower temperature.

The California Association of Nurserymen recommends that you plant gardenias in different situations according to the climate of your locale. In the perfect locale try group planting, hedge, focal points. . . In less perfect areas plant in containers. Growing Gardenias is another one of the special gardening pleasures afforded California for here, as in few other areas of the country the Gardenia is an outstanding performer.

Local Climate Suits The Geranium, African Native

Geraniums, or pelargoniums (the names are used interchangeably) are synonymous with California. Here this perennial grows so abundantly and with so little care that this state seems its natural habitat, although most varieties of the geranium are native of South Africa.

Most common to all is the garden geranium which grows to three feet, less in the dwarf forms and in many colorful varieties: Alaska, white; Fiat Supreme, shrimp pink; Alice of Vincennes, red; Alphonse Picard, scarlet. Its velvety leaves are kidney-shaped with scalloped edges and often with a bright color edging inside. The Martha Washington geranium or Lady Washington pelargonium grows in a more racy manner than the garden variety; its leaves are heart and kidney-shaped and crinkled along the margins and they surround large flowers of white, pink, red, lavender, and purple. Trailing plants are the Ivy geraniums. Their foliage is smooth and glossy green and like Ivy. Flowers are less in quantity on this geranium. They appear in the same color range as the Martha Washington. This geranium is particularly outstanding as a ground cover on slopes or parking strips.

Odoriferous Varieties
A fourth type of geranium includes all those varieties whose leaves give off pungent and spicy odors when crushed. They are Peppermint, Finger Bowl, Lemon, Nutmeg, Oakleaf and Rose geraniums. The Peppermint is a semi-trailing variety that will climb to six feet if given support. Its leaves are gray-green with a silvery fuzz and the flowers are white with red centers.

Finger Bowl and Lemon geraniums both smell lemon-like. The Finger Bowl has pink or rose flowers with darker markings, and the Lemon features shiny deep green lemon scented leaves and purple or lilac flowers.

Whitish flowers blossom on the Nutmeg Geranium which grows with slender straggling branches and gray-green leaves, scalloped on the edges. The leaves are a delicate nutmeg scent. A pungent woody aroma is given off by the lobed leaves of the Oakleaf geranium. This

plant grows sturdy and shrubby with bluish, rose and violet flowers which are marked in darker shades of these colors. The last variety of these scented geraniums is the Rose geranium growing with abundant foliage and rose or pinkish flowers veined in purple. The leaves have a pleasant fragrance and were once used for flavoring apple jelly!

Planting conditions required by the geranium include full sun, except in hot summer climates where light shade is recommended by the California Association of Nurserymen. Very obliging, the geranium will grow in practically any well drained soil and does not require too much watering or feeding. In fact such treatment tends to make the plant go to leaf and flower less readily. Pinching, removing faded flowers and cutting back older plants to renew growth will keep your geraniums in good form.

Does Well As Potted Plant
Most varieties of geraniums do well in pots or containers. For potting use a mixture of three parts garden soil, one part leaf mold or peat moss and one part coarse sand. Plant in a medium sized pot for geraniums grow best when slightly root-bound. Water thoroughly and then let the soil become dry before watering again. Never fertilize often than a month, using one level teaspoon of balanced fertilizer for a five-inch pot. Follow the feeding with a thorough watering.

Geraniums can be planted in all sorts of situations, often depending on the variety. Fine bedding selections are the garden geranium and the fancy leafed varieties. The Martha Washington geraniums are handsome in pots and in the cut leaf types, especially, so they can be enjoyed for fragrance's sake in the patio or terrace. Window boxes or pot shelves are excellent locations for the dwarf geraniums, where they can be closely looked at and enjoyed. Geraniums are the most pleasing perennials, the many-varied geranium and enjoy the bright greens and the cheery colors of this garden favorite.

Lantana Choice Shrub For Bank Or Rock Wall

A truly state-wide plant is the lantana. For this shrub can be grown in its trailing, dwarf or medium height forms to suit situations throughout all of California.

The lantana grows as an evergreen or a deciduous plant in cold weather. Its ability to repair frost damage quickly means it can be planted in areas colder than 24 degrees states the California Association of Nurserymen. There are three forms of the lantana, the Camara, the trailing lantana and the callowiana Goldrush. The Camara will grow to six feet as a shrub and 20 feet against a wall. Its leaves are dark green and it flowers in flat blooms that open yellow or orange and change to red and scarlet.

The trailing lantana is considered the hardest of the family. It is low and rapid growing with trailing branches that reach three feet. Its foliage is made up of small leaves. Dense heads of fragrant lavender-pink flowers also appear.

Habitual Trailing
Saffron yellow flowers bloom on the callowiana Goldrush, which is a hybrid between the other two varieties. The callowiana also has a trailing habit of growth, very graceful, with deep green foliage as a background for the colorful flowers.

The planting site for the lantana should be full sun, for it will mellow in shade. An undemanding plant as far as care goes the lantana actually grows better without fertilizer or too much water. To prevent woodiness, cut back and thin out in the early Spring. Throughout the state, in Southern California particularly, the trailing varieties of the lantana are used as ground covers or spilling over a rock wall or bank. The shrub forms are very pleasing in cool climates and can be controlled from too much scraggling by pinching back. Undemanding of care, hardy and blooming in lovely colors, the lantana can bring many many gardening pleasures.

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Foothill Beauty Rated Best For Ground Cover

Bring the wild beauty of the California foothills and mountains into your yard and patio by planting ceanothus or wild lilac which offers 60 species, varieties and hybrids, 44 species of which are natives of California.

The ceanothus in many of its species has shown itself to be very adaptable for home gardens. Some species do better in certain California locales than others. Discovering what species will adapt best to your area will reward you well, for this native grows in forms that make fine ground covers as well as excellent foreground and background shrubs.

Ceanothus gloriosus or Point Reyes lilac grows native in the coastal strip above San Francisco from Point Reyes to Point Arena. A very low growing variety it spreads to five feet in a dense mat and reaches a height of 4 to 24 inches. The leaves have slightly spiny-toothed margins and are leathery and dark green. Lavender-blue flowers that are very fragrant bloom in rounded clusters. One of the most useful ground covers of this group it can be kept flat by pinching back upright growth. Plant it in a well-drained peaty soil and don't be afraid to water, for it's thirstier than the other species. Another low-growing variety

of the wild lilac is the Carmel Creeper or ceanothus griseus horizontalis which grows as a native of the Monterey Peninsula and central coastal area. It reaches various heights from 18 to 30 inches spreading from 18 to 15 feet apart. This variety tends to mound if planted too closely; space plants eight feet apart when setting them out.

Favors Coastal Climate
Blue Blossoms, Ceanothus thyrsiflorus, grows in the coastal range from Santa Barbara north into Oregon. Its color varies in each area from deep to pale blue and the blooming period varies, too, from March to June. Coastal conditions suit this low-growing wild lilac best. In its common and dwarf forms you can have plants growing from 2 to 20 feet. The common Blue Blossom grows from 4 to 20 feet with dark green glossy leaves. Its dwarf forms, Mary Lake and Royal Blue, bloom in intense blue flowers, are fast growing and widespread shrubs reaching out 6 to 10 feet and up to two feet.

Medium height wild lilac varieties include the Santa Barbara Ceanothus and the hybrid Mountain Haze of the San Diego Ceanothus group. Santa Barbara wild lilac comes from the northwestern part of Santa Barbara county and southern San

Garden Chat Set on Fruit

Joe Littlefield will show viewers how to discern ripeness from picking at ripening fruit and also give hints on disbudbing stone fruits for larger fruit on today's telecast of "Garden Chats" Sunday, May

1, 12:30 p. m., KTLA, Channel 5.

Joe will also give "Garden Chats," viewers suggestions on planting dahlias for lots of late summer and early fall color, showing how Mexican sunflowers can be used for background filler and color.

Part of the program will be devoted to the planting of gladiolus bulbs—showing why some flowers.

Walteria Civic Meet Set Next Wednesday

Police protection and school sites will be among the topics of discussion at the monthly meeting of the Walteria Civic Assn. at 8 p. m. Tuesday in the Walteria Recreation Hall. The group will discuss Police protection in the area and act on a resolution recommending a plan for acquiring school sites.

Favors Coastal Climate
Luis Obispo county. This variety can be distinguished by its dense branches and dark green wrinkled leaves. Deep blue flowers appear on it in February through April and it reaches a height and width of three to five feet. Because it is fast-growing, treat each plant of the Santa Barbara Ceanothus as a perennial with a short garden career, using it for temporary effects, says the California Association of Nurserymen. But you can continue to grow this variety in your garden after one plant has finished by planting seeds or cuttings—sort of a circle process.

Dwarf companion to the Sierra Blue San Diego Ceanothus is Mountain Haze which grows in the two to four foot range. Investigate the planting possibilities of the many varied wild lilac at your nurseryman's and enjoy one of the loveliest of the California natives.

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